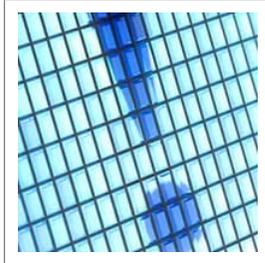


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Analyze this: The route to sustainable cost reduction

AutoPilot's real-time analytics eliminates false alarms and improves productivity

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IT support can waste hours chasing down application bugs and glitches reported by users, only to discover there were no real problems in the first place. False alarms happen often, and cost businesses valuable time and frustrate users.

Complex mission—critical applications—especially those apps that span distributed and mainframe tiers and use various middleware solutions—can generate an abundance of alarms, real and false. This creates a different kind of big data problem for many enterprises. Many monitoring tools produce a large volume of data in the form of alarms—the bulk of which are not for real problems. This can be overwhelming to the business, according to Charles Rich, Vice President of Product Management at [Nastel Technologies](#).

"Many customers can't keep up with the flow of events from different monitoring systems," he explains. "One of our clients was generating over 10 million events a day and realized it would be impossible to evaluate all of them as it would take more than 24 hours. A large percentage of these are false alarms. But until you look, how do you know which are important and which are junk? If you look at everything, you fall behind and can't keep up. And the ones you don't get to could be the most critical."

[AutoPilot®](#) is a real-time monitoring and analytics solution that can solve this problem and reduce the number and duration of outages, according to Rich. The software provides real-time monitoring and predictive analytics for a broad range of applications and middleware including IBM WebSphere Application Server, the IBM WebSphere MQ family of products, IBM WebSphere Message Broker, [IBM WebSphere DataPower](#), [TIBCO RV/EMS](#), and [Solace](#). It can provide a single pane of glass across all of these products and deliver real-time visibility across both distributed and mainframe tiers.

COMPANY AT A GLANCE >>

"Using the solution, one high-tech manufacturer was able to reduce their severity 1 problems by 90 percent, service desk tickets by 70 percent, and significantly free up support staff involved in problem resolution. This also enabled this company to use their technical resources to help grow the business and not just to keep it running," says Rich.

Find problems before users do—be proactive

The reality is that there are many CIOs that are not satisfied with their current monitoring solutions. In a recent [survey](#) of 150 IT decision-makers in North America, 31 percent said the ROI of their company's infrastructure is poor, 35 percent said fair and only 3 percent said excellent.

One issue is that many businesses utilize a location strategy in order to reduce costs. This might include both offshoring and outsourcing. Unfortunately, this can have its own hidden costs. The external support group will not be all that familiar with the applications they are managing and end up raising the number of incidents and the cost per incident by chasing false alarms. AutoPilot's real-time analytics can prevent the cost incurred innately in eyes-on-screen monitoring, enabling an outsourced, remote support group to be more productive with improved staff utilization.

Rich explains that Nastel stands out by providing real-time visibility that warns administrators about potential problems before they make an impact, turning IT workers into heroes. With AutoPilot, IT teams can find and resolve the issue before it affects users or the business. This saves the company money and solves one of the major challenges of IT—getting out of reaction mode.

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Charles Rich, Vice President Product Management, Nastel Technologies

“AutoPilot looks for patterns in the stream of events it receives,” Rich explains. “But instead of raising an alarm when one of these events crosses a threshold, it instead is looking at a combination of events called a situation. This situation might involve a combination of issues such as a problem with a message, a payment transaction and a system resource. And these events may be coming from multiple monitoring systems, not just Nastel –captured events.”

Analyzing event streams is known as situational analysis, and combines events from many sources into a composite meaning. AutoPilot is able to do this automatically, in–memory, and without any custom programming, according to Rich.

“It adjusts to the changes in your environment over time. And that starts working day one,” he says.

Further, AutoPilot creates key performance indicators (KPIs) about the events, watching them for abnormal behavior. The monitoring software uses KPIs such as change latency, update velocity, exponential moving averages, and many other statistical functions. AutoPilot measures a change in rate of change. This type of analysis can eliminate false alarms and only notify about authentic problems that describe situations, as opposed to individual events.

“This approach deals directly with the signal–to–noise ratio issue, reducing the noise and transforming the big data from events into a small manageable set. It can create sustainable cost reduction and improve productivity,” Rich explains.

Flexible monitoring customized out–of–the–box

The more than 200 companies using AutoPilot span more than a dozen industries, from financial services to healthcare to insurance to retail. Typically, AutoPilot has been applied by IT operations and shared services, but recently one of Nastel’s banking customers creatively applied it to the problem of monitoring compliance. Many financial companies now must comply with the Dodd–Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which passed in 2010 in response to the 2008 financial crisis. The law puts more stringent regulations on trading, in the hopes of preventing another crash. AutoPilot is able to track the reporting of trades in real–time, allowing customers to comply with the new law.

“AutoPilot is data–type agnostic,” Rich explains. “It can analyze any type of data. At this bank, they applied this to the messages in their trading environment for derivatives, which are highly regulated. They needed a way to present in real–time the life cycle of a reportable trade and determine if there was an actual or potential breach in responsibilities. Our analytics and the ability to correlate messages and transactions and utilize the content of the payload was a unique set of capabilities that make monitoring Dodd–Frank trade reporting in real–time possible.”

NASTEL BRANCHES OUT INTO COMPLIANCE WITH DODD FRANK >>

AutoPilot also specifically benefits customers with a multi–tier infrastructure that can be complicated to manage. This can be anything from a small company that was recently bought by a larger company, to a massive, multi–national corporation.

“A multi–tier infrastructure often happens when there are mergers and acquisitions by another company,” Rich explains. “Something like MQ connects the existing IT infrastructure, instead of replacing what they already have. AutoPilot is a best–of–breed solution for providing visibility into that environment.”

“AutoPilot is data-type agnostic.”

Charles Rich, Vice President Product Management, Nastel Technologies

Access to middleware is often only available to the members of the middleware team. However, there are many other stakeholders who need information about it. Many times developers and those in test need to know why a specific message was not received and typically ask the middleware team to find out for them. Using AutoPilot’s web–based self–service capabilities, these stakeholders can be provided with their own access to MQ; thus, improving their productivity, Rich says.

In addition, out–of–the–box, Nastel provides monitoring for almost the entire WebSphere family of products —WebSphere Application Server, MQ, Message Broker, Enterprise Service Bus and more. But the product works not just with IBM products, but with combinations of other middleware products, endpoints and mainframes.

“Many of our customers use more than just IBM products,” Rich says. “They also have other vendor products like Java and .NET. Since we support IBM and these other things, we’re often uniquely suited to be the vendor of choice.”

An agile business model tailored to the customer

Nastel is an IBM Business Partner, working with the IBM Innovation Center to support the latest versions of WebSphere software. Their close collaboration with IBM means every version of AutoPilot works with the newest versions of WebSphere MQ and other middleware products. The company also helps provide support focused solely on IBM WebSphere MQ users.

And since Nastel is a small company with a singular focus, Rich says they will turn on a dime for their customers. The company has implemented an agile business model and will customize the products for each and every business.

"Because we use an agile development model, our customizations for customers are not one-offs," he explains. "We don't employ a waterfall development cycle, where you get one release at the end of the year or twice a year. We're constantly releasing new features. So when a customer requires something special and we decide to do it, that just becomes part of the product and then everybody benefits."

For more information about Nastel Technologies, visit www.nastel.com. 

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